The Rothbard-Rockwell Report
TRIPLE R

UNION NO MORE

Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

You've heard about the Republic of Texas, the band of radicals who want the Lone Star State to go it alone. You may not have heard of the Most Serene Republic of Venice. Yet only days after the secessionist standoff in Texas ended, another standoff in the heart of Northern Italy was just beginning.

The scene was not a house trailer in the frontier country of the Davis mountains, but one of the most famous and populated cities in Europe. Eight young men dressed in fatigues announced the secession of Venice as they hoisted banners off the top of Cathedral of St. Mark.

The banner bore the famed symbol of the lion of St. Mark. "The Most Serene Republic of Venice has been reborn today," they announced. "Long Live St. Mark!" The timing was not accidental. It was the 200th anniversary of the Napoleonic invasion of the city. For Venicians, May 12th is a day that will live in infamy.

What percent of this former city-state's residents want to secede? No polls were taken, since it's not supposed to be a legitimate question. But everyone knows that despite the forced union that is Italy today, the citizens strongest ties are to their historic political communities, among which Venice is a premier example.

To be politically correct in Italy is to advocate permanent union. It is also to advocate a continuation of the socialist redistribution system, whereby the richest regions in the North are looted on behalf of the poor ones in the South. It is an unjust system which pretends there is such a people as "Italians" as opposed to a mere language. (Indeed, there are still many dialects in Italy; speakers of Sicilian can't understand men from Turin.)

Like the present United States, Italy is an unnatural union, a relic of empire, that was stable only so long as people believed that superpowers were essential to global security, and geopolitics was a field only for experts. The same goes for India, Russia, Germany, Great Britain, and almost every African country. With the days of big government slipping behind us, micro-states are resurgent. Secessionism is now truly international.

Yet only five hours after the Most Serene Republic of Venice was reborn, its founders were dragged away by armed police backed by 30 Army commandos. The arrest of these men was international news for two days, as if it were necessary to make an example out of these secessionists. Such conduct will not be tolerated.

It seems that governments everywhere are anxious to put down secessionist sentiment. This applies in territories like Texas and Venice that have already proven they are viable independent nations. At the same time, it's rare to hear an actual argument as to why gargantuan artifices such as "Italy" or "the United States" should continue to exist.

Once-great city-states like Venice should be allowed to go their own way. Yet this suggestion is too much on the cutting edge for the Northern League, the once-fringy movement of Northern Italian secessionists that holds increasing sway in the Italian parliament. They too

continued on page 7

INSIDE

Intelligence Briefing 2
Out of the Mouths of Babes 8
PAUL GOTTFRIED
Enough, Already 10
MICHAEL LEVIN
Come Home, Pat 11
JUSTIN RAIMONDO
The Amish as a Test Case 15
L.H.R., JR.

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INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING

✦ **The word is, that when Bill Clinton injured his foot walking downstairs at that Florida "bachelor party,"** it was because he was carrying so much extra weight: a young blonde.

✦ **The Los Angeles Police Department has spent $800,000 investigating the charges against Mark Fuhrman,** and come to the conclusion that there is no proof whatsoever for any of the claims of brutality, racism, and excessive force made against him (*Washington Post*, May 8, 1997). Why, then, did he tell such tall tales to screenwriter Laura Hart McKinney? Well, she was writing a movie script about a "rogue cop," and Fuhrman, who was having an affair with her, told her what she wanted to hear.

✦ **What American city has the highest percentage of home-schooled children?** It's Redmond, Washington, home of Microsoft. The figure is an astounding 60%.

✦ **On that slum summit in Philadelphia,** why is it necessary for outsiders to sweep the streets and paint the walls? We're glad to see Clinton do something productive for once—when he could take his eyes and hands off the local girls—but that area isn't exactly lacking in muscular young men with nothing to do. Why isn't a shipment of brooms, brushes, and paint enough? And if it isn't enough, why the heck should anybody else do it?

✦ **At the summit, we also heard the usual whining about "black-on-black" crime.** Imagine someone complaining about the scourge of "white-on-white" crime, implying that blacks should be the victims, as "black-on-black" moaners imply whites should be.

✦ **Hey, David Frum!** If you keep lifting material from this newsletter, we're going to have to charge you double.

✦ **Hey, NOW!** The Army rapists claim their attacks on teenage recruits are consensual. Meanwhile, the feminists claim that date rape is endemic on campus because of an unequal power relationship between boys and girls. Well, given the power relationship between drill sergeants and teenage girls, obviously no sex acts can be voluntary. Yet the feminists, because the rapists are black and the victims are white, are AWOL.

✦ **According to the Supreme Despots, you don't have the right to select your own roommate.** Two young Madison, Wisconsin, women rented a four-bedroom house and advertised for roommates. They didn't want males, sleep-over boyfriends, women with children, or smokers. After interviewing a lesbian, they added that category to the not-wanted list. Bingo—they were convicted of discrimination (translation: exercising their freedom of association), and the Supreme Court approves.

✦ **Tiger Woods deserves a gold medal.** No, not for golf! When Bill Clinton offered to send Air Force One to fly him to the Bronx to celebrate baseball desegregation, Woods said no thanks. He had promised to go to Mexico with two college chums. This was not only a blow to the rotten presidency, whose prestige is shrinking before our eyes, but a demonstration of exactly the right priorities: private life before state-glorification. *Way* before (*New York Times*, April 19, 1997).

✦ **Congratulations to the *New American*** for its color cover of Ron Paul (April 28, 1997), and its reprint of his speech on "A Bridge Back to Liberty," also available on Ron's web page (www.house.gov/paul).

✦ **Hail and Farewell.** Ambrose Evans-Pritchard is returning to England

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after an heroic tour as the London *Sunday Telegraph*'s Washington correspondent. In his farewell column (April 20, 1997), he tells how he learned that "Bill Clinton grew up in the Dixie mafia stronghold of Hot Springs, and that his brother, Roger, was a convicted drug dealer who was once taped during under-cover surveillance saying 'got to get some for my brother, he's got a nose like a vacuum cleaner.'" Ambrose learned "about sworn testimony that links Clinton to cocaine smuggling in the early 1980s." He learned "that Clinton's chief of security in Little Rock was gunned down in 1993 by assassins who seem to be enjoying immunity. Oh, yes, and let us not forget the allegation that Bill and Hillary helped empty a bank called Madison Guaranty.... Bill Clinton is not the first president with the skeletons of the mob in his closet. Harry Truman, for instance, was a protege of the Pendergast crime machine in Kansas City. All you have to know about Bill Clinton is that he chose Patsy Thomasson–top lieutenant of convicted cocaine dealer Dan Lasater–to be his White House chief of personnel."

✦ **And then Clinton "set about eliminating the Director of the FBI, William Sessions,"** notes Ambrose, "who was known for his refusal to countenance White House interference in the affairs of the Bureau. The post of FBI Director is supposed to be a 10-year appointment that puts it above politics. But Sessions was toppled in a Washington putsch, without a murmur of protest from America's press, and replaced by the hapless errand boy Louis Freeh. And I almost forgot, the Clintons installed their friend Webster Hubbell as 'shadow' Attorney General–until Hubbell was jailed for Arkansas crimes."

✦ **Clinton also spawned "an armed militia movement** involving tens of thousands of people," writes Ambrose. The last time anything like this occurred was in the 1850s with the emergence of the Southern gun clubs. It is easy to dismiss the militia as right-wing nuts: it is much harder to read the complex sociology of civic revolt. At the very least the militias reveal the hatred building up against the irksome yuppies who run the country. It is under this president that domestic terrorism has become a feature of life in America, culminating in the destruction of the Oklahoma federal building on April 19, 1995. What set the deadly spiral in motion was the Waco assault two years before, and the cover-up that followed. No official has ever lost a day's pay for precipitating the incineration of 80 people, most of them women and children, in the worst abuse of power since Wounded Knee a century ago. Instead of shame and accountability, the Clinton administration accused the victims of setting fire to themselves and their children, a posthumous smear that does not bear serious scrutiny. It then compounded the injustice by pushing for a malicious prosecution of the survivors."

✦ **Most Americans "refuse to accept that Vincent Foster committed suicide**, and they have good reason for their doubts," adds Ambrose. The paramedics and crime scene witnesses in Fort Marcy Park on July 20, 1993, tell a story that flatly contradicts the official findings. A police Polaroid shows a .22 caliber bullet wound in Foster's neck that the autopsy somehow failed to note. Are Americans to believe that Hillary Clinton's closest friend shot himself twice, with two different guns?"

✦ **On the totalitarian FBI, says Ambrose**: "Whether it is the persecution of dissident investigators in the air disasters of Pan Am 103 and TWA 800, or allowing the White House to peruse the secret files of political opponents, or the alleged intimidation of key witnesses in the Foster case, the Clinton FBI is starting to look like the enforcement arm of a police state. "The latest shocker is the decision to punish Frederic Whitehurst, the whistleblower who first came forward with tales of corruption at the FBI crime labs. An internal inquiry has conceded that the lab tilted evidence 'to incriminate the defendants' and cooked up the theory that a fertilizer bomb blew up the Oklahoma federal building after it found fertilizer at the house of a suspect, Terry Nichols. But the Justice Department seems more interested in denigrating Whitehurst, the lone hero of this sorry tale, than flagellating itself.

✦ **"Look at the treatment of Carol Howe, the undercover informant who tracked the early stages of what appears to be the Oklahoma bombing conspiracy,"** notes Ambrose. "The moment she surfaced as a threat to the 'lone bomber' case against Timothy McVeigh, this January, she was indicted on criminal charges. The FBI claims that she was dropped as an informant months before the bombing, but debriefing reports show the Bureau continued to receive her intelligence weeks after the blast. They also show that she named members of a neo-Nazi terrorist cell who had cased the Oklahoma federal building in December 1994 with the intention of bombing it. Yet the FBI did not follow up her reports. It conducted 26,000 witness interviews, most of them irrelevant, but could not find time to pursue the suspects who were specifically named by a paid informant.

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✦ **"This leaves the nasty suspicion that the FBI is shielding this neo-Nazi group** in order to cover its own tracks. If it turns out that the bombing was a bungled sting operation by the FBI, as some of the victims are now alleging," adds Ambrose, "the only fit response is to send bulldozers down Pennsylvania Avenue to flatten the Hoover Building once and for all."

✦ **Where did Dole get that $300,000?**, asks an Alabama lawyer friend of ours. Dole has been on the government payroll all his life. How can he afford to make a $300,000 loan with no payments of principle or interest for eight years? Mr. Dooley's reply, and ours: like all politicians, he stole it fair and square.

✦ **If you've seen one of the rare photos of FDR** in his new $52 million memorial, you know just how ugly and indeed weird the huge statue is. Wearing a Dracula-like cloak, Roosevelt looks like the monster he was. And the rest of the monument is grotesque as well, including the statue of *La Boca Grande* herself, Eleanor. The statues of men in a breadline and a fascinated listener to one of FDR's propaganda broadcasts are hideous too, as are the murals celebrating welfare and the entire brown-stone monstrosity. But the PC crowd got Roosevelt's cigarette holder and Eleanor's fox fur banned.

✦ **Roosevelt joins the memorialized D.C. immortals,** we're told. But the Washington memorial, which says nothing about Washington, inspires only tasteless jokes. The Jefferson memorial (with its censored quotes) and the Lincoln memorial, with the dictator as a pagan god, are at least impressive in a fascist way. But now, in its declining days, the central state can't even build monuments to itself that don't inspire revulsion.

✦ **20th anniversary celebration:** the honored guest at Cato's big D.C. dinner–besides counterfeiter-in-chief Alan Greenspan and other Beltway notables–was smut king John Stagliano. Stagliano, as *U.S. News & World Report* pointed out in a cover story (Feb. 2, 1997), is America's leading pornographer, and one of Cato's biggest donors. Stagliano, by the way, calls himself "The Butt Man."

✦ **50th anniversary celebration:** San Francisco's gay kingpin, political consultant Jack Davis, was an embarrassment to his clients–especially the San Francisco 49ers, who are angling for taxpayers money in a stadium referendum. Two columnists reported on his 50th birthday party. Mayor Willie Brown and the rest of the media-political establishment were there for public acts of homosexual sex (Davis, who wore a rat around his neck, had attached a giant male organ to the ceiling as his party's symbol). Causing the most stir was a ceremony in which a Satanic priest had a pentagram carved into his bleeding back by a Satanic priestess, who then urinated on him and sodomized him with a bottle of Jack Daniels. When the party was criticized, Davis first denounced those "who don't understand avant-garde art," and said that if they were offended, they "should have seen the after-party party." Now he claims that the Satanic priest was an Apache, and the ceremony a protest against the white man's forcing of firewater on the Indians (*San Francisco Chronicle*, May 5,9, 1997, and London *Sunday Times*, May 11, 1997).

✦ **Spending like drunken lobbyists, the Republican leadership wasn't snookered on their budget agreement with the White House.** Selling out their professed agenda of scaling back government is part of their daily routine. It was hardly a surprise to see Gingrich weepy-eyed over this big-spending plot. Especially disgusting has been the behavior of Dick Armey, who flips out at the slightest suggestion there might be something wrong. But what can be said of Americans for Tax Reform, which had nothing but sweet nothings to say for the budget deal? Its head can't criticize the Republican leadership if he wants their favors for his other enterprise, a lobbying firm with clients such as Joseph E. Seagram & Sons (*National Journal*, May 1997).

✦ **Anyone pleasantly surprised by the *Weekly Standard*'s attack** on the budget deal (headline: "NO DEAL") would be bothered by looking a bit closer. Two editors didn't even sign on. Included was a dissent by Fred Barnes, long-time admirer of big-government schemes. And the same week's *Newsweek* magazine hyped an essay by David Brookes, the *Standard*'s resident professor of national socialism. We ought to love the budget deal, he says, because it repudiates anti-government extremism.

✦ **Next time, we're cheering for the Red Sea.** The titanic struggle over the control of the National Rifle Association ended as many of these things do: with the liberals firmly in charge. The deciding factor was Buckley conservative and former movie Moses Charleton Heston's decision to back the tired leadership of Wayne LaPierre. The new "moderate" tone of the NRA was revealed by Heston, now a top board member, in a radio interview with KGO radio in San Francisco, where he said "AK-47s are inappropriate for

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private ownership" and effectively endorsed the Brady Bill: "I'm not even–don't even think it should be repealed" (Video Monitoring Services of America, May 6, 1997). The good news is that true 2nd amendment backers still have the Gun Owners of America to wage the tough battles for them.

✦ **The establishment hoped the escapades of Rich MacLaren would discredit secessionist sentiment.** They've even got a new moniker for the Hitler of the Month: separatist. Hey, are you a separatist? Hands against the wall! Yet it didn't quite work that way. Local opposition to MacLaren wasn't based on his desire to see Texas as an independent nation. In fact, it's hard to find people in Southwest Texas who firmly disagree with that goal. It was his phony-check-writing and lien-attaching legal antics that irritated people. Obviously, it's possible to advocate secession without engaging in funny-money finance. Who did MacLaren think he was? Greenspan?

✦ **Neither has the Republic of Texas organization been discredited.** MacLaren represented a dissident faction. Some speculate that his last-ditch standoff was motivated by the desire to bring down the entire group. You see, he had been tossed out as the organization's head last January. As for the RoT's historical claims, there's something to them: Texas was made part of the union in 1845 by majority vote of Congress, when the Constitution requires a two-thirds vote of the Senate. Now where did we put that Lone Star flag?

✦ **One wonders: was Timothy McVeigh or his right-wing politics on trial?** In the guise of introducing a "motive" for the bombing, the prosecution spent far more energy proving that McVeigh didn't like the government than proving he bombed a building. He had an anti-government t-shirt! He flew a don't-tread-on-me flag! He thought the government acted maliciously at Ruby Ridge and Waco! The hidden text was that anyone who shares these views is a potential bomber, and probably ought to be under house arrest. Meanwhile, the prosecution produced far less actual evidence than even the most doubtful of the government's critics thought they had against McVeigh. Many still want to know: what did the government know and when did it know it?

✦ **Robert Novak says that the "GOP revolution ends with the 1997 budget deal."** Trouble is, he's about three and a half years too late. As the *Triple R* said at the time, the GOP revolution ended before it ever got off the ground. In December 1994, a lame duck Congress passed the Gatt treaty over the objections of the majority of the public, and with the assistance of quite a few conservative Capitol Hill types on the take.

✦ **Brent Bozell, RIP** We were deeply saddened by the death of Brent Bozell, an extraordinary Catholic journalist and conservative writer from the days when such people had principles. Once a colleague (and always a brother-in-law) of Bill Buckley's, Bozell came to believe that the Buckley scene was reinforcing, not threatening, the anti-Christian and statist trends in America. So he took a detour and advocated a monarchy–not a direction we would favor, though it would be a big improvement over the welfare-warfare state Buckley has spent his life celebrating. Co-author of *McCarthy and His Enemies*, ghostwriter of Barry Goldwater's *Conscience of a Conservative*, editor of the extraordinary *Triumph* magazine, and author of hundreds of articles, Bozell's accomplishments were justly celebrated in Patrick Allitt's *Catholic Intellectuals and Conservative Politics* (Cornell University Press, 1993). We need more men like Bozell.

✦ **The Republicans are still hoping to trip up Clinton on some scandal–any scandal–before he leaves office.** But some matters are too hot to handle. You won't hear any Republicans utter a peep about the prospect that the White House is involved in a cover up of the downing of TWA 800, quite possibly by U.S. military "friendly fire." (Don't worry that you're dead; you were killed by a friend.) Neither will they bother to look more closely at the Oklahoma bombing, and the prospect that someone inside the bureaucracy knew about it in advance and did nothing to stop it, exactly as with the World Trade Center bombing.

✦ **There's yet another scandal going untouched**: the prospect that the Clinton administration locked up 1.7 million acres in Utah prior to the election on behalf of the Indonesian Lippo Group. The Lippo Group, huge donors to Clinton and the Democrats, may have interests in several companies producing clean-burning coal of the type the Clinton action took off the market. The definitive story by Sarah Foster ("What's Behind the Utah Coal Lock-Up?") appeared in *Dispatches* (Jan. 24, 1997).

✦ **Is Gore a Red?** Edward Jay Epstein's unauthorized biography of Armand Hammer points out that Hammer, like his father, was a Soviet agent. How interesting, then,

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that Al Gore's father worked for Hammer as the highly paid head of one of the oil tycoon's subsidiaries. Gore Jr. was close to Hammer too, and they traveled to Reagan's 1981 inauguration together. Just what was this connection all about? Could Gore be the real Manchurian Candidate?

✦ **The problem with the inner city isn't high taxes**, writes Joe Mathews in the *New Republic* (April 21, 1997). The trouble is the people, lazy, incompetent, crime-prone types who have no interest in working. So forget low-tax enterprise zones as promoted by Kemp and Clinton. No businessman wants to open up in a place where the residents are utterly incapable of holding onto a job, or producing anything if they could.

✦ **Kemp stormed out of a Washington conference on taxation.** Thomas DiLorenzo explained that the federal empire got its biggest boost, not with the Great Society or even the New Deal, but with Lincoln's invasion of the South and "Honest Abe's" subsequent war crimes against person and property. It was too much for Kemp, who threw a fit in the middle of Tom's speech, yelling "Jeez!" and "Gawd!," throwing his arms up in the air, and, finally, storming out so all could see. The scene made Tom famous, and caused Kemp's ragtag band of diehard backers to rethink whether he has the temperament to be president. It's about time. Don't we need someone with a level of emotional maturity above, say, 5 years old? (*The Free Market*, July 1997)

✦ **It doesn't take much to alarm a neoconservative.** *First Things* magazine did it by considering when civil disobedience is justified. At times the symposium permitted anti-government views to be aired, so it was quickly denounced by the social democrats who sit on the board. Now, Tom DeLay is under fire by the same crowd, led by John Leo of *U.S. News*. DeLay's thought crime was calling for the impeachment of some federal judges. Why is this evil? "It has the whiff of the campaign against Communists in government in the 1940s and '50s," writes the neocon Leo.

✦ **Bet the farm.** James Grant of *Grant's Interest Rate Observer*, the perpetual bear, from time to time discovers a class of stocks he likes. This time it's small farming and especially cheap agricultural commodities, plus the companies that supply machinery to food growers. In particular, he likes Agco Corp. of Duluth, Georgia. It supplies a number of brand names, including Massey Ferguson, Allis, Hesston, White, and Landini. Its brands aren't always at the top of the line, but its distribution channels are strong, and, importantly for Mr. Grant, its stock doesn't appear overvalued (May 9, 1997).

✦ **A Heritage of taxes?** Last month we wondered if the Heritage Foundation would buy into the phony privatization plan for Social Security reform. In a letter designed to drum up contributions, Ed Feulner provides this clue. "The Heritage Foundation," he writes, "will never support any Social Security reforms that cut out the safety net on which millions of older Americans have come to rely." Translation: taxes will be raised. Why? If you don't cut present beneficiaries but divert present revenue to Wall Street, someone's got to pick up the tab.

✦ **To an outsider, the rules of American politics can be baffling.** It's good to sing the praises of black leaders, for example, because it shows you are sensitive to the concerns of the community, and respect its leaders. Unless: that leader happens to be Louis Farrakhan, the smartest and most popular of all black leaders. If you praise him, you don't get brownie points; quite the contrary. Your career, and probably life, are ruined. From time to time, people make mistakes. Jude Wanniski, for example, has been claiming that Farrakhan is coming around on supply-side economics, and even appreciating the insights of Ludwig von Mises. He is paying for these remarks by being branded a flake and a wacko, if not pure evil. Jack Kemp, of course, praised Farrakhan and saw the trend line of his political life completely reverse. Virginia Postrel, editor of *Reason* magazine, uttered some nice things about the Million Man March. She said that white people were not in danger there, and that the march organizers were on to something. But then Ramesh Ponnuru–one of a new spate of writers for the misnamed *National Review*–blasted her for her insensitivity. Postrel's peculiar response: "As a classical liberal, a woman, a Jew, and a cosmopolitan intellectual, I find Mr. Farrakhan's conservatism generally revolting and have absolutely no desire to claim any commonality with it." You might compose your own message at home using this model, just in case you get called by the Inquisitor. "As an anti-federalist and a rooted Southern Christian white male, I find Farrakhan's anti-capitalistic and negrophilic rantings disgusting..."

✦ **"Tiger Woods Also Needs To Apologize," says the commie sports editor of the *New York Times*** (April 27, 1997). According to the very left-wing Dave Anderson, Tiger–already in trouble for refusing to call himself black–was interviewed by *GQ* magazine, and during the interview, he "told sexually distasteful jokes about African-Americans." RRR

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UNION NO MORE cont. from page 1

are for separation, but a return to the city state would break up the too-large nation of Padania the Northern League favors.

Indeed, the entire West is in the early stages of a secessionist meltdown of all overgrown governments. Moreover, this meltdown will go beyond regional secession to real, authentic community secession. We know from recent experience with the Soviet Union that artificial monoliths can unravel faster than anyone expects, and can do so at the first indication of a separatist victory.

Right here at home, the Southern League has been advocating Southern secession. Freedom lovers wish them Godspeed. Their very existence is what keeps the establishment so cautious about granting even moderate goals, like allowing more 10th amendment freedoms. The elites fear that by giving an inch, the masses will take back miles and miles for themselves. Next thing you know, everyone will be declaring their own right to self determination.

Several years ago, the 10th amendment movement was the hottest thing on the political horizon, and a few mainstream Republicans and think tanks started to embrace the idea. The purpose of the 1995 welfare bill was to coopt the states rights movements on behalf of an agenda that in fact had nothing to do with increased political autonomy.

The welfare bill allowed a few programs to be administered by the states as opposed to the feds. But the real battle of states rights has to do with the other side of the equation: not what the government is giving, but what it is taking. Real steps towards secessionism would allow the states to keep part of their own tax revenue and spend it for purposes of their own choosing, for example, by granting tax cuts.

But let's look further down the line, when secessionist sentiment goes well beyond restoring the original wartime alliance of Southern states. Should the states themselves consider seceding from the secessionists? Of course. For Lincoln's war can't erase a more fundamental reality of American history. The federal government was created by the states on the condition that the states would always be considered prior to the union. The right to secede is implied in the constitutional compact, then as now.

The entire West is in the early stages of a secessionist meltdown of all overgrown governments.

The antics of Richard MacLaren had one profoundly positive effect. They raised, but didn't discredit, the central question of American political life–secession of the states–and thereby broke a 137-year-old taboo. Why shouldn't states be allowed to conduct referenda on the union?

The absurdity of the union is nowhere more striking than in regions like Southwest Texas. It is truly a nation unto itself. You're struck by the absurdity of the pretensions of D.C. bureaucrats, who think they can control such a distant and desolate place. Before 1860, Fort Davis was populated only by federal troops and Indians. Even then, the feds couldn't keep their own commander from choosing sides with the secessionists.

But let's say that media types want to disagree. If this is really a democracy, shouldn't the voters of West Texas, and all the states, decide for themselves whether they are benefitting from the union? Every state should have such a vote. And neither should it require 2/3 agreement to break up the United States. Every state that wants out should be let out.

Just what are the arguments against this? There are probably thousands, but let's deal with the main ones.

The states are too small. Really? The smallest state, Rhode Island, is more than twice as big as Hong Kong, which is one of the richest and politically stable nations on earth. Everyone seems exercised about Hong Kong's new status as part of China, but where is the agitation for Rhode Island's independence?

Dean of the Austrian School of economics, founder of modern libertarianism, and restorer of the Old Right, Murray N. Rothbard (1926–1995) was a one-man army of liberty. The *Triple R* is inspired by his spirit, and dedicated to his vision.

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As for Texas, it is 170,756 square miles. The territories of Great Britain, Austria, Ireland, and Switzerland put together aren't that big. In fact, present-day Italy (113,521 square miles) is smaller than Texas. As for the in-between states, Alabama is larger than Austria.

The union is sacred. We've heard this question-begging assertion for generations. It reflects the phony religious rhetoric that Lincoln conjured up to cover up mass bloodshed and looting. The union is not sacred. The rights of people to form their own political communities is closer to that status than the present forced union.

Secession is violent. This wordplay is common among Jaffaite neocons, but it overlooks a crucial distinction between revolution (overthrowing the government), a coup d'etat (taking over the government), and secession, which is the peaceful act of political disassociation. If secessions turn violent, it is not the seceders who are to blame but those who attempt to prevent them from exercising their rights to self determination.

Isolation doesn't work. But political autonomy and isolation do not go together. Precisely the opposite. The smaller the state, as Hans-Hermann Hoppe has pointed out, the more dependent it is on trade with its neighbors. And the higher volume of trade there is, the more peaceful the relations between territories. Moreover, self determination also creates competition between states. People can move capital where it is taxed the lowest, for example.

We'll be like Bosnia. But Bosnia is Bosnia because the demarcation between groups and political control is always in dispute—somewhat like the present United States. If we want to prevent cultural clashes, intergroup warfare, and mutual pillaging, we needed clear lines of separation. Separation leads to peace.

States can't defend themselves. Modern weaponry is compact, super powerful, and cheap. It's never been easier for even the smallest of territories to marshal a defense against even large invading forces. On the other hand, no state will be big enough to announce, as the U.S. has, that it's in charge of running the world. Also, the need for a "strong defense" has been wildly exaggerated by the neoconservatives. One reason everyone gets along with Costa Rica, for example, is that its military is tiny to nonexistent. In the states, the strongest defense will be a heavily armed citizenry, and it will defend against the most serious enemy, overweening government.

The world needs a superpower. How interesting that the world is not begging for the U.S. services in this regard. Mostly the world begs for our money, not the political control that comes with it. This has been the century of superpowers, and also the bloodiest in human history. The superpower is the greatest threat to peace and security the world has ever seen.

The states aren't what they used to be. This argument is based on the demographic facts that population mobility has made the states less demographically and culturally defined than they once were. The effects, however, are wildly exaggerated by those who would like to wipe out states altogether. Besides, there's an easy way to find out: let the citizens of the states decide for themselves.

Minorities won't be protected. The subtext to this is that the South will enslave the blacks again and California will kick out the Mexicans. Yet these critics have to recognize that the union hasn't exactly managed minority-majority relations with the greatest finesse. Indeed, intergroup relations were never more peaceful that during the hiatus of the 1930s to the 1960s, when immigration was strictly controlled and the states managed their own racial affairs. It wasn't perfect, but far fewer rights were violated than today.

Should the union be broken up? There's no harm done in asking the people, just as MacLaren had suggested. If we don't get referenda soon, we can expect incidents like that in Venice to take place right here at home. Young and restless idealists, knowing the ballot box is closed to them, will, like Jefferson, *declare* their independence to be a nonnegotiable fact. How many men will have to be hauled off to jail before the elites admit that their beloved union is no more? RRR

OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES

Paul Gottfried

Having had to grade recently more than one hundred final exams in U.S. National Government and Ethics, it seems that certain unfounded beliefs, however systematically challenged, persist among my students. Although most of my charges do not give evidence of being believers, many are opposed to capital punishment "because it goes

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against religion." Clearly these kids have not read the Old Testament; or else they may equate "religion" with the latest pronouncement of the ACLU.

Some of my students also favor affirmative action as long as "it works well." One may have to speculate about the meaning of "working well" in this context. From what I can tell, my students fully accept government intrusiveness and patronage, providing their interests are not threatened. The very ones who profess to believe in affirmative action, however, grow apoplectic about special scholarships being arranged by our college for "minority members."

What can be inferred from this is that support for affirmative action is endorsement for something that is not supposed to gore one's own ox. It is also intended as a statement of niceness spoken without moral conviction. In this behavior my students are hardly different from most college faculty who, according to an extensive survey done by Steven Balch of the National Association of Scholars, express deep reservations about affirmative action, but only do so on unsigned questionnaires. Most of these respondents, concludes Balch, would likely voice the opposite views if forced to give them openly.

Another student, a visitor from Africa, considers California's approved Proposition 187 to be a punitive measure that is unleashing a "heartbreaking process." Californians were not thinking of the "homeless children who were already abandoned or evicted abused children now in foster care." All of these victims need social services, which Californians are apparently unwilling to provide. Far better "to let them [the illegal immigrants] have all these benefits as far as they pay tax too. These people can turn out to be very helpful to the country eventually."

We are urged not to worry in any case: "If the courts continue to rule wisely, then the proposition will never be enforced." The problems with this argument, aside from the faulty assumptions about the cost of social services to illegals, is the confusion of constitutional government with judicial dictatorship.

Anything the people do which my student does not find sufficiently progressive should be a matter for "wise" courts. These should be free to ignore the popular will and even their own legally defined power. It would be useless to put up borders in the America envisaged by this student. Anyone would be free to enter the country, without having to worry about insidious distinctions being made between "legal" and "illegal," and to collect an apparently inexhaustible supply of social services.

One female student discussed her own battle against the kingdom of darkness represented by her Christian upbringing.

Most of my class in Ethics, moreover, rejoices at the prospect of gay marriage. They think Ellen is super for coming-out as a lesbian, and hope that tv will provide more public education about alternative lifestyles. In one particularly revealing essay, a female student discussed her own battle against the kingdom of darkness represented by her Christian upbringing.

Like those around her, she had been "ignorant" about gays and their inspiring lifestyles. But as she matured, presumably at college, she also became "rational" and tried in her essay to express her newly acquired enlightenment. Though nothing in my class, to my knowledge, contributed to this conversion, I did have the chance to see its effects. The student no longer engages in reasoned argument because her every opinion is revealed "rationality." Unlike, say, reborn Christians in my classes who justify themselves with theological arguments, most of the other students never exercise their reasoning powers. They are "rational" and "intellectual" because they ooze particular sentiments. Nothing else is required in most of their classes to certify intelligence or learning.

What strikes me most about such attitudes is not the moral arrogance nor the lack of reasoning. It is the pretense of developing one's mind by doing exactly the opposite. It is the appeal to the Western tradition of rationality without any of the substance. My students and colleagues look askance at me for demanding proof of what are assumed to be "rational" positions held by reasoning people: e.g., that gays are brutalized and impoverished; that blacks and women are being victimized by all social relations not directly controlled by the state; and that white males "owe" minorities preferential access to jobs and public revenues.

Furthermore, it is not "rational" to discuss the genetic basis of intelligence, though it is to assume, without convincing scientific evidence, that homosexuality can be entirely attributed to a mutated gene. Raising critical questions about the applicability

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of "human rights" language to designate the value preferences of American entertainers and tv news commentators is at our college an equally perilous activity: it is not the kind of thing done by rational, thinking "persons." (Our college is also committed to gender inclusive sensitivity.)

A generally uncritical view of the expanding national government is another characteristic of my students' essays, which begs for explanation. This view is certainly not one they picked up in my class, seeing that I spent the entire semester underlining the differences between the original constitution and the fake one under which we now live.

The students regard me as "unpatriotic" to whatever extent I criticize the federal behemoth.

For emphasis, I drew on the blackboard a downward line and wrote next to it the agencies and judicial decisions associated with the undoing of our now wrecked constitutional republic. Even so, several students credited me with making them "respect the way our country has progressed." One student praised my pedagogy for showing that our national government "has remained the same but even better." How something can be the same but even better eludes me, but perhaps this kid views consistency as the hobgoblin of small minds.

Another student went on ecstatically about how "new civil and natural rights keep coming out of our constitution," so that each day "you wake up, roll out of bed, and enjoy them." Clearly this student couldn't figure out the distinction between civil rights accorded by a particular government and natural rights, which Hobbes and Locke assumed were brought from a pre-political condition into civil society.

As fate would have it, I devoted several lectures to making this unnoticed distinction. Nor could this particular student understand any better than activist judges that constitutions are established to be followed. They are not a hive out of which new bees continually emerge, though, unlike bees, these fictitious rights created by courts swallow up the real ones.

Note that the students who make such comments about our political system are predominantly Republican and characterize themselves in class as "moderate conservatives." Not surprisingly, they regard me and my paleo colleague Wes McDonald as "unpatriotic" to whatever extent we criticize the federal behemoth. For them, love of country means veneration of the present governing structure, together with such "American principles" as multiculturalism, openness, and caring. While they do occasionally criticize federal overreach or the excesses of anti-discrimination laws, they by no means identify these critical positions as "conservative." They are simply gripes which it is hoped will not make them seem "unpatriotic."

The point here is not only that my colleagues have ideologized straitjackets that our students run to put on. Even more distressing is the attempt to justify this barbaric thought control and mind destruction as the nurturing of intelligence. At work here is the lingering influence of the radical Enlightenment, the crusade begun in the eighteenth century against religious and political authorities waged in the name of critical reason.

Right now the human faculty of mind is being obliterated at colleges, as evidenced by my students' essays, but the war against inherited civilization and what remains of social order goes on. Indeed, the advance of rationality is judged by how much of the accumulated wisdom of that part can be overturned–and by how thoroughly critical intelligence can be rooted out in favor of being "rational." This rationality without thought has become a defining characteristic of the "college experience," which by now means paying for college without being forced to gain an education. RRR

ENOUGH, ALREADY

Michael Levin

The Holocaust, the Nazi attempt to exterminate European Jewry that ended over a half-century ago, is more prominent than ever in public discourse. It is the continuing subject of best-sellers, movies, public displays. It is inescapable.

There is of course the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., soon to be followed by a second Holocaust Museum in New York City. The immediate aim of these two tax-supported institutions seems to be to induce in visitors the mother of all

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unpleasant experiences, but as they concern an event the U.S. had nothing directly to do with their justification remains unclear. When pressed, their supporters reply that they warn us of the dangers of hate, a topic I will return to.

At the moment the most conspicuous Holocaust fuss concerns Switzerland's financial dealings with Germany during World War II. The Swiss, declaring themselves neutral, accepted gold and other property from the German government; despite the completion of negotiations with the Allies at the end of the war, the claim is now being made that Switzerland owes descendants of Holocaust survivors anywhere from $70 million to $5 billion. It not only appears that Switzerland will be paying, but other countries such as Argentina are now beginning their mea culpas about their relations with Nazi Germany.

The Swiss affair comes just after the appearance of Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, the cause of a huge stir. Goldhagen's supposedly "controversial" thesis, which earned him prizes, and the attention of the media and the academy, was that the average German's participation in the Final Solution was uncoerced. What nobody was able to explain was where the controversy lay. Had previous historians claimed that Germans liked Jews? Was the problem Goldhagen's scholarly methods? But that sort of academic sniping does not normally draw headlines.

Or was Goldhagen saying that Germans were inherently evil? Not officially; Goldhagen denied this repeatedly, and assured interviewers that the Germany his book described no longer exists.

A Note From Our Fearless Publisher

Our late, great editor Murray N. Rothbard was absolutely courageous in dealing with controversial issues. How he would have loved Professor Michael Levin's "Enough, Already." Of course, we don't publish articles just because they're controversial. They must be original, truth-telling, and of the highest quality. These are the grounds on which I urge you the reader to judge this essay. As to the Establishment, although Professor Levin displays his usual brilliance and precision, that will not matter. He and the *Triple R* will be vilified. But what else is new? We owe it to you, to the memory of Murray, and to the principles we share, to give you the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. *Nothing* will stop us from doing so.

Burton S. Blumert

Actually, *Executioners* does implicitly push such a message; it is impossible to miss the anger as Goldhagen almost obsessively catalogs instance after instance of knowing malefaction by ordinary Germans. After all, what else can be the point of repeating what everyone knows, except the stoking of resentment? A book like Goldhagen's written about any other group would have been condemned as straight-out hate literature, but the time had found the man, for hate literature about Germany was suddenly acceptable.

The Swiss and Goldhagen affairs are just the most conspicuous instances of an unmistakable trend. The Holocaust has acquired its second wind and is, if anything, more alive than it was even ten years ago. There is now a permanent Holocaust Room in my sons' high school. Recently touring Germany was an exhibit entitled "War of Destruction: The Crimes of the German Army, 1941-1944," whose aim, according to its catalog, is to give the lie to the idea that ordinary German soldiers might have acted out of a sense of duty, and conducted themselves with reasonable decency.

At about the same time the New School in New York ran an exhibit of photographs of Jewish children deported from France. One reviewer was prompted to ask "What is the point, so long after the event?" But the question was merely rhetorical, and immediately answered by a torrent of cliches: "[I]dentity is returned. Dignity is restored. From an anonymous mass of bone and ash, they become again Henri, Annette, Rachel...."

Often the hidden and not-so-hidden message is that the rules of moral common sense must give way where the Holocaust is concerned. Neutrality, a position which, adopted more frequently, would have saved untold millions of lives in recent centuries, is henceforth to be considered "unspeakable" where the Swiss are concerned, according to the *New York Times's* Thomas L. Friedman, because neutrality is impossible in the face of pure evil. The thought that the Swiss government might not have wanted to be invaded, or see its young men die in a fight that did not concern them, is simply out of bounds. Predictably, Friedman advises Switzerland to build a Holocaust museum.

The Holocaust also sanctions boundless hyperbole. A spokesman

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for the American Jewish Committee recently asserted that, in attacking God's chosen people, Hitler had attacked God. An even more extreme statement of this sort is Robert Nozick's, in *The Examined Life*: "the Holocaust is an event like the Fall in the way traditional Christianity conceived it, something that radically and drastically alters the situation and status of humanity.... Like a relative shaming a family, the Germans, our human relatives, have shamed us all. They have ruined the reputation of the human family.... The human species is now desanctified; if it were ended or obliterated now, its end would no longer constitute a special tragedy."

From a Christian point of view, according to Nozick, there are now three significant events in human history: Man's fall, his redemption through the sufferings of Jesus, and the undoing of that redemption by the Holocaust. Christ could not have died for our sins, since the sin of the Holocaust is too big. God's promise that His Son's death redeemed us is no longer operative, perhaps because, Nozick speculates, when God made the promise He had no idea we would do anything so monstrous. Thanks to the Holocaust, "the Christian era has closed."

One problem momentarily detains Nozick, as it should anyone who imputes such cosmic significance to the Nazis. What about all the other atrocities that have been committed throughout history, especially in this century? "There is no point in arguing about comparative cruelty and disasters," he airily replies. But there is indeed. In fact, there is so much point that it should get us wondering what precisely is behind all the Holocaust-mongering.

So let's remind ourselves of a few facts. The Holocaust is not the worst atrocity in all history, or of this century. It is not even the second worst atrocity of this century.

According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, that distinction is held by the depredations of Comrade Mao Zedong in the two decades following his take-over of China in 1949. No-one knows exactly how many people died at the hands of the Communist regime, but the number is at least 30 million and possibly as many as 65 million. Jasper Becker's recent *Hungry Ghosts* estimates that ideologically driven and ruthlessly enforced agricultural policies caused the deaths of perhaps 30 million Chinese between 1959 and 1961 alone. That's ten million people per year, ten times what the Germans, for all their vaunted efficiency, achieved. To put it another way, Mao and his cronies killed as many of their own countrymen as died as a result of World War II.

Why are there no museums sprouting up everywhere to commemorate the victims of communism?

Second place in the enormity sweepstakes, of course, is held by Uncle Joe Stalin. While mass murder was a tool of the Communist regime in Russia from its beginnings under Lenin until the old Bolsheviks disappeared in the 1960s, Stalin outdid himself in the Great Terror of the 1930s. Again nobody has exact figures, but the forced collectivization of farming cost at least five million lives in the Ukraine alone, and the purges took at least an equal number.

Germany was of course much smaller than China or Russia, but, surprisingly, the Nazis don't even hold the record for the proportion of a nation's population killed during an extermination campaign. That honor goes to the Cambodian Communists under Pol Pot, who between 1975 and 1979 managed to kill more than 30% of Cambodia's then-population of 8 million.

Two questions thus present themselves. The first is, simply, why are there no museums sprouting up everywhere to commemorate the victims of communism? Why aren't there exhibits dealing with the Russian Shoah? Why are the names of the labor camps in the Gulag less familiar to American schoolchildren than Auschwitz? Why isn't Maoism the textbook example of evil? The answer, I'm afraid, is that American and European intellectuals, who control the agenda on matters such as historical significance, are considerably more sympathetic to what Mao, Lenin, Stalin, and Pol Pot were trying to accomplish than to Hitler's aims. They see Stalin's Terror and Mao's Great Leap Forward as ghastly mistaken means to a wholesome end, grisly distortions of an ideal in itself admirable, namely equality.

As intellectuals like to put it, there would be nothing wrong with socialism if it could only be made to work, if only its imposition didn't always incur such frightful human costs. But the Hitlerite idea of racial hierarchy, and its corollary of racial purity, is seen by intellectuals as intrinsically odious. The sheer idea of a group celebrating its racial virtues is repugnant, even if it did not hurt a fly. Academic intellectuals find Marxism's consequences a bit

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of an embarrassment, but still they teach Marx as a serious thinker. You will never hear academic intellectuals call the mountain of corpses created by Stalin a challenge to Christ's redemptive service.

This is also why the Holocaust is not allowed to become part of the past (and why, with the passing of the Holocaust generation, we are beginning to hear about the woes of the children of Holocaust survivors). Right now the country is facing extraordinary racial difficulties. For reasons no-one fully understands–I know I don't–the American intellectual establishment attributes these difficulties to "racism," and thinks they can be solved by strenuous avoidance of all racial thinking.

As an instrument in the propaganda campaign against such thinking the Holocaust is a Godsend, A Lesson For Us All About Where Race Hatred Leads. The Holocaust has thus been grafted onto, and become continuous with, the crusade for minority rights and what is seen as an ongoing struggle against discrimination. That is where the will to build all those museums and mount all those exhibits comes from, and why the discovery of evil in the heart of the German people is a major event. The Gulag is never taken as a lesson for us all about envy, egalitarianism, class animosity, or economic hatred, since intellectuals aren't so sure those are bad.

The second, more difficult, problem is that of finding a reasonable attitude to take toward the Holocaust in the present overexcited climate. The tendentiousness and sanctimony of "Holocaust affirmers" can prompt a reaction to the opposite extreme, much as one feels impelled to disagree with everything the obnoxious office know-it-all says. This impulse is natural, but not to be indulged uncritically: even clubhouse lawyers are occasionally right.

It is a mistake, for instance, to let one's exasperation express itself in Holocaust denial. The Holocaust happened. Evidence is overwhelming that the Nazis did try to exterminate European Jewry, and managed to kill between five and six million. It should not be hard for conservatives and libertarians to believe that a totalitarian government is capable of such a thing. Second, it must be admitted that the Holocaust was one of the darkest episodes in history, made worse by the cold rationality with which it was carried out, and puzzling by the heights that German culture had previously attained.

The Gulag is never taken as a lesson for us all about envy, egalitarianism, class animosity, or economic hatred.

Friends of liberty might wish to use the Holocaust to teach lessons of their own. Like the communist excesses, it shows what powerful governments with a strong sense of mission can do. It shows the overall evil of socialism (for, after all, the Nazis were National Socialists). It shows the dangers of economic envy, in this case the envy felt by ordinary Germans still suffering the consequences of the first world war toward the highly successful Jewish community. For the same reason the Holocaust has nothing to tell us about the "racism" that supposedly permeates the United States; whites do not wish to avoid blacks because of the wealth of blacks, or their undue influence in the professions.

But it would be a mistake to try to top liberals in Holocaust-mongering. The main offense of liberals, more than their willful misunderstanding, is that of beating people over the head with an event that should be fading into history. It is understandable that Jews wish to keep the memory of the Holocaust vivid, just as it is understandable that Southerners remember Reconstruction, that Australian aborigines memorialize the arrival of Europeans, or that any other group focus on the high and low points of its history. But for everyone else, enough is enough. RRR

COME HOME, PAT

Justin Raimondo

Pat Buchanan has defected to the War Party. The conservative leader who once rejected the blandishments of Empire has made the growing anti-China war hysteria his own. The man who declared that the throne of the Emir of Kuwait is not worth a single American life now thinks that Taiwan is worth plenty of those lives. What happened?

For many conservatives, including Pat, the implosion of Communism and the end of the Cold War meant the end of a conservative rationale for global interventionism. In this connection, Pat's opposition to the Gulf War and his call for the U.S. to get out of Nato won him an

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even more devoted following. So his reversal is bad news for the conservative movement and the Republican Party: both may be even more inundated by the anti-Chinese war propaganda being generated by the neoconservatives, who have at last found a stand-in for the Kremlin.

Unlike many of my libertarian friends and allies, I was willing to write off Buchanan's anticapitalist tirades as inchoate "populism," so long as he stuck to the concept of foreign policy outlined in his 1991 *National Interest* article, "America First and Second and Third." In this essay, Buchanan traces America's career as world-saving global crusader, mocking McKinley's claim that "God had told him to take the Philippines." The allied victors of the Great War were "an alliance of empires" that "held most of mankind in colonial captivity." He writes approvingly of the fact that, even as the Nazis and the Soviets divided up Europe, "we saw, in the world's bloody conflict, no cause why our soldiers should be sent overseas to spill a single drop of American blood."

Here is where "economic nationalism" leads: war.

In appropriating the slogan of the principal opponents of that war, the America First Committee, Buchanan symbolically debunked the interventionist mythology that depicts WWII as a glorious "anti-fascist" crusade. "How other people rule themselves," he added, "is their own business."

Yet in a now all-too-typical warmongering column (April 17, 1997), Pat touts the manifesto of the Sinophobes, *The Coming Conflict With China* by Ross Munro and Richard Bernstein, and declares that we must defend Taiwan against "Red" China or else "we would be finished in Asia." (Oh no!)

In Taiwan, "China would have an unsinkable aircraft carrier directly athwart the sea lanes through which pass the raw materials and oil on which Japan depends for survival." This, by the way, is the same Pat who wants to punish Japan for the crime of selling us cars we want to buy at prices we want to pay.

A few years ago, Pat sneered at the idea of a Chinese threat. But now we are supposed to be worried that "China has used her hoards of cash from U.S. trade to build her war machine." Denouncing "appeasement," Pat bellows that it is "time to show Beijing there are still a few Americans who never learned how to kowtow."

If Pat is so worried that we might be "finished" in Asia, why did he call for U.S. withdrawal from South Korea in 1991? "If Kim Il Sung attacks, why should Americans be first to die?" Back in the good old days, Pat declared that "it is time we began uprooting the global network of 'tripwires,' planted on foreign soil, to ensnare the United States in the wars of other nations, to back commitments made and treaties signed before this generation of American soldiers was even born."

Given this premise, then why should Americans be the first to die to protect Taiwan or any other foreign nation?

Pat has written eloquently of the forces of nationalism that toppled Communism and are now sweeping through Eastern Europe, yet he ignores the effect of Western intervention on rising Chinese nationalism–intervention that, as exemplified by the pro-drug Opium Wars, has a long and despicable history.

By threatening to fight for the warlords of Taiwan–who only recently adopted "democracy" to mask their repression of the native Taiwanese–the United States will provide the Peking regime with a new ideological rationale.

How do we explain Pat's defection to the camp of the interventionists, where, in chorus with his former enemies, the neoconservatives, he calls for policies that must lead to war with China? In spite of the fact that the late Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, was famous for his maxim "to be rich is glorious!", and that the country is rapidly taking the capitalist road, Marxism-Leninism is still the official ideology of the regime. Pat is beating the dead horse of Communism, just for old time's sake.

What led to Pat's sudden reversal? In fact, it's not so sudden. To begin with, Pat has been an interventionist for most of his political life. As a fervent anti-Soviet, he took the Buckley-CIA line that we must embark on a world-saving crusade to destroy the Red Menace-and if we have to lose our old Republic in the process of achieving "victory," so be it.

Warmongering has been associated with the conservative movement for so long, and the non-interventionist history of the movement so deeply buried, that the temptation for a conservative politician to pander to ingrained militarism–and the wealthy special interests that promote it–is always great.

It would be easy to say that Pat has "sold out"–but this is not quite accurate. The ideological roots of his turnaround can be traced back to his growing hostility to the free market and his always bellicose stance,

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which involves his calls for yet more military spending. The essential error of this talented political leader, his insistent trade protectionism and growing anti-capitalism, has led directly to his reversal on the foreign policy front.

Here is where "economic nationalism" leads: to the spectacle of Pat threatening war if the Chinese cut into Hollywood's profits by allegedly pirating Madonna videos. RRR

THE AMISH AS A TEST CASE

L. H. R., Jr.

American history is chock full of separatists. That's not surprising, considering the country was established in a separatist act. One of the great evils of war and economic crisis was to unify the country under a single authority, and quash the rights of lower-order groups to self-government.

Almost everyone buckled under, especially religious groups. Before the second world war, for example, churches did not routinely hoist the American flag at their altar. After all, this was a sanctuary where the state had no authority. Many Christians considered it a desecration to display the state's battle emblem. Churches might pray for political leaders, but they did not worship "the state as God walking on earth," in R.J. Rushdoony's phrase.

But the second world war was a loyalty test for the entire country. Contrary to popular history, entering the war was a hugely controversial act, requiring much lying and scheming on the part of Roosevelt and his affiliates, foreign and domestic. A mass movement of resistors had been building for the decade prior to Pearl Harbor, an event that worked to silence critics rather than truly change minds about the merits of involving ourselves in European politics.

During that war, American churches were challenged to enlist in the homefront campaign. They were to support the troops, which also turned out to mean cheer as their sons were drafted, morally corrupted, mutilated, and murdered in distant lands. The bare minimum requirement for churches–and this was especially true for Catholics–was to fly the American flag, and to open assemblies with the anti-Southern pledge of allegiance.

Today, the U.S. flag remains on the altar and in the sanctuary of most churches. The best possible interpretation of the U.S. flag is that it represents the freedom to worship. If that is the case, there should be no tradition, much less an expectation or a requirement, that this flag be flown in church. More and more, orthodox congregations are removing it. You might suggest this in your home church, and see what happens.

Some resist on broader grounds. The Amish, to their credit, have traditionally been impervious to outside governance. They have never flown the flag in their communities. They have resisted all manner of imposition. Much to the government's chagrin, they even managed

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to obtain an exemption from having to pay the Social Security tax, a test case that was expanded to other clergy later.

In this case as in many others, it's the radicals who end up doing the hard work of liberty on behalf of the rest of us. Call them extremists, but they have consistently stood up to the state in ways more mainstream groups have not.

The Amish are not confrontational by nature. But just about anyone who conducts his life in a free and rational way these days is bucking for a confrontation with the omnipotent state. Homeschoolers are a case in point. Here they merely want to pass on their values to their children and give them the best education possible. As a consequence, many have found themselves terrorized by police-state tactics.

The Amish have a tradition that used to be common in American life. Their children attend school until they are 14, and then they are sent to learn something just as important as reading and math: the work ethic. From 14 to 18, they work as understudies of craftsmen of various sorts. This way, they can make themselves valuable to the community and prepare themselves for adulthood.

Meanwhile, of course, most everyone else's kids waste the years between 14 and 18 being babysat by the secular elites, marking time until the culture tells them they must go to college, at which point they take all the remedial courses necessary to bone up on what every 14-year-old knew in the past.

The Amish are on to something here. Where has the work ethic gone? Down the public-school rathole. Those who want out of this system got some encouragement from a 1972 Supreme Court ruling that said the Amish can take their kids out of school at 14 to work.

That ruling weakened the law enough to prevent complete government control from being imposed on families throughout the country. It also had an important psychological effect on the state: it reminded the bureaucrats and politicians that there are pockets of people out there who won't be pushed around.

It's the radicals who end up doing the hard work of liberty on behalf of the rest of us.

But while the Amish have the educational exemption, there has never been clarity about Amish labor practices. Who doubts the government also sees them as a grave threat? But for years, they've been ignored. The Amish know nothing of federal labor law. This year, however, the Department of Labor–in its crazed union-driven campaign against child labor–has begun to harass them, and claim that ignorance is no excuse.

Several business owners in northwestern Pennsylvania employing Amish teens were subjected to grotesque fines of $20,000 for using "child labor." They were also forced to fire all their young workers–even though employing them was beneficial to everyone involved. But rather than play the role of a doormat, the Amish are fighting back.

Such fines and harassment threaten traditional community practices, interfere with the freedom of religion, and represent a direct assault on the rights of parents. In addition, there's the libertarian point that the exchange between a teen and a capitalist is entirely voluntary. Everyone benefits, including the community at large, so why should it be illegal?

The Amish appear to have the upper hand, both in terms of community relations and the laws that exempt their religious communities from certain federal invasions. But here's the kicker: as a result of the government's overreach, yet another exemption may be allowed, this time in the drive to ban teen work.

Child-labor laws are among the most fragile of leviathan's intricate network of control. Hardly anyone thinks it is a good thing to make hard work illegal. And once an exemption is allowed, other parts of the anti-work code could begin to unravel and be subject to serious political challenge.

Unlike many separatists in society, the Amish are upheld by virtually everyone (rightly or wrongly) as a charming group of Luddites. In the pr battles of this confrontation, the Amish will win hands down, and once again we will owe the separatists a debt of gratitude for their courage to stand up to the dictates of the omnipotent state.

After a hard week's work, these Amish boys can go to their community gathering places on the Sabbath. They will not be asked to say a pledge to the government. They will not be asked to bow down before the U.S. flag. They will not see the government's chosen emblem flying above them as they pray. All the while a new generation is being formed to know who they are, what they are, and what they must do in order to maintain their way of life. RRR

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